



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
Southern District of Indiana*

---

*10 West Market Street  
Suite 2100  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-3048*

*(317)226-6333  
TDD (317)226-5438*

*FAX NUMBERS:  
Criminal (317)226-6125  
Administration (317)226-5176  
Civil (317)226-5027  
FLU (317) 226-6133  
OCDETF (317)226-5953*

**July 2, 2003**

**CONTACT PERSONS:**  
**SUSAN W. BROOKS**  
United States Attorney  
(317) 226-6333

**DONNA R. EIDE**  
Assistant United States Attorney  
(317) 226-6333

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **REAL ESTATE APPRAISER SENTENCED FOR HIS ROLE IN MORTGAGE FRAUD SCHEME**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that MELVIN GIRTON JR. of Indianapolis, Indiana, was sentenced to 44 months imprisonment today by U.S. District Judge Larry J. McKinney following his conviction by a federal jury in February 2003 on four counts including conspiracy (one count), mail fraud (three counts) relating to a mortgage fraud scheme. Of the seven persons indicted, five pleaded guilty and two defendants, MELVIN GIRTON and Deb Barnes (closing agent) went to trial.

-More-

## GIRTON-2

GIRTON is the last defendant to be sentenced.

This case was the result of a two year investigation by the federal United States Attorney's Mortgage Fraud Task Force including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service.

Paul Dailey operated Platinum Mortgage in Indianapolis from 1998 until May 2001 during which time the company brokered more than 100 fraudulent residential mortgages on properties principally in Center Township in Indianapolis. Dailey and other members of the conspiracy,<sup>13</sup> of whom have been convicted, recruited several real estate appraisers and closing agents to assist in the fraudulent scheme. The properties were appraised for two to three times their true value. Straw purchasers obtained loans on the property well in excess of their true value, the profits were shared by the members of the conspiracy, and the purchasers defaulted on the loans, leaving the properties abandoned and boarded up.

MELVIN GIRTON was one of several appraisers used by members of the conspiracy to get appraisals on properties well in excess of their fair market value. As an appraiser, GIRTON was licensed by the State of Indiana. After he was indicted in this case, the State of Indiana learned that GIRTON had lied on his real estate appraiser's application, falsely stating that he had no prior criminal convictions, when, in fact, he had two prior felony convictions—one in the Utah and one in California. GIRTON's real estate appraiser's license was revoked in November 2002 by the state of Indiana.

-More-

GIRTON-3

According to Assistant United States Attorney Donna R. Eide, who prosecuted the case for the government, Judge McKinney also imposed three years supervised release following GIRTON's release from imprisonment and a fine of \$2,000.

####

brookspress03.176.wpd